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**U.S. Small Business Administration
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West Virginia Calendar of Events:
<http://app1.sba.gov/calendar/states/calendar.cfm?op=group&grp=72>

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*All of the SBA's programs and services
are provided to the public on a
nondiscriminatory basis.*

MESSAGE FROM WEST VIRGINIA ACTING DISTRICT DIRECTOR...JUDY K. MCCAULEY

At the U. S. Small Business Administration we are proud of our 50 years of service to America's small business community. I would like to personally invite you to join the SBA family in Morgantown, West Virginia on Monday, March 8 and Tuesday, March 9, 2004 for SBA Region III's 50th Anniversary Celebration



The celebration kicks off with a luncheon on Monday at 12: 30 p.m. Featured speaker SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto will recognize the many achievements of small businesses throughout the region. There is no cost for the luncheon, but advance registration is required.

At 6:00 p.m., the Northern West Virginia Chapter of the National Contract Management Association will be hosting their monthly dinner meeting. SBA's Region III Administrator, Allegra McCullough will keynote the event and will discuss the new SBA and its role in rural economic development.

You are also invited to participate in Region III's **Economic Development Summit: Developing and Retaining Entrepreneurial Talent in Rural America** on Tuesday, March 9th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The summit features an impressive group of experts who will discuss major economic development issues facing rural America. You also will have an opportunity to participate in an open forum with key policy makers and national small business leaders. Again, there is no fee for this event, but advance registration is required.

All events will take place at the new Radisson Hotel on Morgantown's revitalized waterfront. Morgantown, home of West Virginia University, has been consistently recognized as one of the best small towns and leading Main Street communities in America. It has been a model for community revitalization based on strong public-private partnerships. Morgantown is the ideal location to discuss the role of small business in economic revitalization.

I hope that you can join us for these exciting events. If you need accommodations or directions, please visit the website for the Radisson Hotel at <http://www.radisson.com/morgantownwv>. For additional information visit the SBA West Virginia website at <http://www.sba.gov/wv> or contact Randi Nuzum in the West Virginia office at 304-623-5631, ext. 238. Please RSVP by February 25, 2004. I look forward to seeing you in March as we celebrate America's small business community.

SBA Reopens 7(a) Loan Program

The U.S. Small Business Administration reopened its 7(a) loan program after a brief suspension, with an additional \$470 million in lending authority, and a loan cap of \$750,000 per loan recipient.

The \$750,000 limit is the gross amount of a loan or loans to a small business and its affiliates that may be approved under the 7(a) program during fiscal year 2004. Section 7(a) loans already made in fiscal year 2004 are to be included in calculating such gross amount. Loan requests exceeding \$750,000 should be considered for a combination of a 504 and 7(a) loan.

During the period that the \$750,000 loan cap is in place, SBA must be in a first lien position on assets financed by the SBA guaranteed loan.

Once SBA receives its full year's appropriation, it expects to be able to keep the program running without interruption, working with Congress to manage the available funding.

Anyone with questions may contact Roger Britton, acting Capital Access Team Leader, at (304) 623-5631 ext. 226 or via email at roger.britton@sba.gov.



Economic Growth Tour Comes To Morgantown

The U.S. Small Business Administration will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary by bringing SBA to the community through Economic Growth Tours.

For two exciting days in March, the SBA will be in Morgantown to conduct a series of meetings designed to focus on the economic future of the Mid-Atlantic Region and to provide

opportunities for small business entrepreneurs, owners and advocates to express their opinions to government policy makers.

On March 8, SBA Administrator Hector Barreto will be the featured speaker at the 50th Anniversary Luncheon at the Radisson Hotel in Morgantown. The Administrator will be recognizing the achievements of small business leaders from across the Region.

On March 9, an Economic Development Summit will be held at the Radisson. The Summit, entitled, "Developing and Retaining Entrepreneurial Talent in Rural America," will provide an open forum for the general public to interact with a panel of government, non-profit and private industry experts to discuss the issues and solutions pertinent to rural America and to network with key economic development leaders.

Both events are free and open to the public, but seating is limited and pre-registration for BOTH events is required. For more information on these and other events scheduled during these two days, contact the WV District Office at (304) 623-5631 ext. 238 or visit our web site at www.sba.gov/wv.

Centralization of 7(a) Guaranty Purchase and Liquidation

The West Virginia District Office completed the shipment of 7(a) and disaster home and business loan files to the Herndon and Santa Ana Centers, respectively, on Friday, January 23rd. Shipment of the files is part of the centralization process that has been underway.

The newly established Herndon center will be handling all 7(a) loans involving lender liquidation oversight and guaranty purchases on a nationwide basis in the near future. The Herndon center staff will be dedicated solely to processing 7(a) liquidations and guaranty purchases. Its goal will be to provide you with exceptional customer service and quick turnaround times. Lenders who currently have SBA guaranteed loans classified in

liquidation should have received a letter from our district staff informing them of the transfer of the loan file to Herndon and an explanation of what next to expect.

For future loan liquidation and guaranty purchase matters, except on cases being completed by the district office, lenders should direct all correspondence and/or documentation to:

**National Guaranty Purchase Center
U.S. Small Business Administration
Herndon Corporate Center
1145 Herndon Parkway
Herndon, VA 20170**

For questions regarding the Herndon center, lenders may inquire either at (703) 487-9283 – *please note that this is a temporary number* – via email to loanresolution@sba.gov, or by fax to (202) 481-4674.

Your district staff also stands ready to assist you with any questions during the transformation period.

SBA & DOD Integrate Pro-Net & CCR Database

The U.S. Small Business Administration, the Department of Defense, the Office of Management and Budget and the General Services Administration are taking steps to simplify the federal contracting process by creating an integrated database of small businesses that want to do business with the government.

The integration of the existing Pro-Net and DOD's Central Contractor Registration (CCR) databases will create one portal for entering and searching small business sources and will assist small businesses with marketing their goods and services to the federal government. The integration began on Jan 1.

The CCR-PRO-Net linkage is part of a comprehensive strategic effort to transfer Pro-Net's functions to the E-Gov Business Partner Network (BPN) in order to simplify government wide vendor registration. The network is part of the Integrated Acquisition

Environment (IAE), one of the e-government initiatives under the President's Management Agenda. IAE is carrying out OMB's mandate for new processes to streamline federal acquisition by creating common integrated business processes for buyers and sellers in the federal marketplace. The network incorporates DOD's CCR database. Registration in CCR is now a requirement for federal contracts. After Dec. 31, CCR will assume all of Pro-Net's search capabilities and functions and small businesses will no longer need to manually register in both Pro-Net and CCR.

This merger is another step toward the goals to unify common systems and ensure that data need only be entered once and then reused.

Procuring agencies and contracting officers who rely on Pro-Net as the authoritative source for vendors that are certified in SBA's 8(a) Business Development program, HUBZone Empowerment Contracting Program and Small Disadvantaged Business program will now access this information through CCR. To conduct market research and confirm eligibility for SBA's procurement preference programs, users will go to the CCR Web site at www.ccr.gov and click on the "Dynamic Small Business Search" button. All of the search options and information that existed in Pro-Net will now be found at the CCR Dynamic Small Business Search site.

Within SBA, Pro-Net will be superseded by the Small Business Source System, an internal database of businesses certified by SBA as participants in the 8(a), HUBZone and SDB programs. Businesses will no longer have to self-certify as small businesses. The SBSS system will perform calculations necessary to determine whether companies are small, based on employment or revenue information entered into CCR. Firms will update their records on the CCR Update Web page and should follow the links and directions found there.

For more information about CCR, please visit the CCR web site

at www.ccr.gov. For more information about IAE, visit the Web site at <http://egov.gsa.gov>. For more about SBA e-Gov activities, please contact Ronald E. Miller, SBA Program Executive Officer for E-Gov at (202) 401-8214.

SBA Presents Disaster Loan Checks

On December 5, 2003, the SBA presented its first disaster loan checks to local homeowners who suffered losses as a result of the severe November storms that caused massive flooding and landslides.

Governor Bob Wise and Congresswoman Shelly Moore Capito assisted by Acting District Director Judy McCauley, presented Charleston residents with their checks at a public ceremony held in SBA's Charleston Branch office.

As of January 20, SBA had approved 216 loans for just over \$5 million to homeowners, renters and business owners that suffered losses as a result of this disaster. These loans will help repair businesses and residences, replace lost or damaged personal property, and help small businesses replenish working capital.

SBA offers loans up to \$200,000 to repair disaster damaged primary residences. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to replace damaged personal property such as furniture and clothing. Loans to businesses of all sizes and nonprofit organizations are available up to \$1.5 million to repair damaged real estate, machinery and equipment, and inventory.



l-r: Congresswoman Capito; Ann & Stephen Ballard; Gov. Bob Wise

Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) provide needed working capital to eligible small businesses until normal operations resume after a disaster. These loans cover operating expenses the business could have paid had the disaster not occurred.

SBA's loans cover uninsured or otherwise uncompensated losses only and interest rates can be as low as 3.125 percent with terms up to 30 years.

Disaster victims may obtain disaster loan applications and information regarding SBA assistance by visiting a disaster recovery center or by calling SBA and speaking with a loan officer. SBA's toll free telephone number is 1-800-659-2955 or 1-800-877-8339 for the hearing-impaired.

8(a) Firm Lands First Government Contract

Innovative Management & Technology Services (IMTS), a North Central WV-based technological development 8(a) firm, recently signed its first federal contract with NASA's Independent Verification and Validation Facility (IV&V). The signing ceremony took place at the NASA IV&V Facility in Fairmont. Taking part in the ceremony was Chirag Patel, president of IMTS; Nelson "Ned" Keeler, director of the NASA IV&V Facility, and Judy McCauley, acting district director of SBA's WV District Office.

The contract will be for work related in NASA's Science, Engineering and Technical Assessments (SETA) area. It is in direct support of the NASA IV&V Facility through the performance of internal assessments of technical reports and research tools, the development and maintenance of specialized tools for use by the facility in the performance of IV&V independent assessments, and in the area of Software Assurance Engineering.

"We are proud to once again be able to give a West Virginia small and disadvantaged business its first Federal contract," said Keeler. "NASA IV&V is committed to providing opportunities for West Virginia small businesses"

IMTS is a SBA certified 8(a) company that was founded by Patel in April of 1999.

The contract will allow for the creating of four full time and for intern positions at IMTS.

“IMTS is very excited to be working with the NASA IV&V Facility on the SETA contract,” said Patel. “This contract marks our first ever government and prime 8(a) contract and we are appreciative of the support we have received from SBA, NASA and our mentor company, DN American.”

The 8(a) program is SBA’s effort to promote equal access for socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses by allowing them to compete in the American economy through entrance to the federal procurement market. In order for a business to be certified 8(a), they must first be classified as a small business, be unconditionally owned and controlled by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who are of good character and citizens of the U.S., and they must demonstrate potential for success. The program provides IMTS the advantage it needs in order to secure federal contract and create jobs in West Virginia.

“The SBA 8(a) program provides a wonderful opportunity for IMTS, as well as other small disadvantaged companies, to grow their businesses and experience the advantages of government contracting,” said McCauley.

To learn more about the 8(a) program, contact the WV District Office at (304) 623-5631 or visit our web site at www.sba.gov/wv.



l-r: Ned Keeler, NASA; Judy McCauley, SBA; Chirag Patel, IMTS

SBA Helps Mold Future Business Leaders

West Virginia’s future business leaders converged on Robert C. Byrd High School to compete in the annual Harrison County Youth Symposium. Approximately 100 Harrison County eleventh grade students gathered November 4-5 and were given the task of creating a business plan for a viable business venture in the Harrison County area. The students were separated into five teams and provided business start-up materials furnished by the West Virginia District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration. Each team was assigned a facilitator and given one day to create a presentation based on the guidelines provided in the material. The teams were given eight minutes to make their presentation before a panel of judges comprised of members of the local business community. After each presentation, the judges asked questions on the presentations and rated each accordingly. Members of the winning team each received dinner compliments of Texas Roadhouse as well as a \$400 scholarship to the Free Enterprise Camp in June of 2004.



SBA employee Mykel Moore served as judge for this year’s event and BIC Manger Nick Lambernedis acted as a facilitator for one of the groups

Students from Liberty, Bridgeport, Robert C. Byrd, Lincoln, and South Harrison High Schools all participated in the symposium. The symposium was co-sponsored by the Harrison County Chamber of Commerce and the Harrison County Board of Education with support from the WV District Office of the SBA.

District Office Retirements

Since our last newsletter, the West Virginia District Office had two additional employees retire or leave the Agency.

Retiring in January was Mykel Moore, who served as the team leader for Marketing and Outreach with over 37 years of experience. Also leaving the Agency this past January was Margaret Schrader. Margaret was with the Agency for over 17 years.

Their experience and knowledge will be greatly missed.

Small Business Week 2004

Plans are now underway to honor West Virginia’s Small Business Week award winners for 2004. This year, the WV District Office will be partnering with the 2004 West Virginia Conference on Entrepreneurship and hold our annual awards banquet during the conference scheduled for May 18-20 at the Charleston Marriott.

Registration information and a listing of WV’s 2004 award winners will be released soon.

Please visit the WV web site at www.sba.gov/wv for additional information or the WV Conference on Entrepreneurship web site at www.wvec2004.com.

2004 WV Resource Guide Now Available

The 2004 West Virginia Small Business Resource Guide is now available.

The Guide addresses how to start a small business and provides an overview of SBA programs. It also lists key contact information for major state and local organizations and agencies that are available to assist prospective small business entrepreneurs as they start and develop their business.

To request a copy, contact the WV District Office at 1-800-767-8052 ext. 8 or by email at wvinfo@sba.gov.